

Fall 11-19-2008

Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Mark Haas, composition

Mark Haas

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

Senior Recital

Mark Haas, composition

featuring performances by:

Mark Haas, multiple percussion / piano

Clark Littlepage, marimba

Renaë Eikey, soprano

Robert Heath, clarinet

Caitlyn Zirkle, cello

and the

MU Percussion Ensemble

conducted by

Steve Hall

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Smith Recital Hall

8:00 p.m.

Program

Oasean Escape (2006)

Clark Littlepage, marimba

Oasean Escape has become the most popular piece that I have written for percussion literature. Chris Scarberry titled the piece after performing it, and in his mind, the work depicts the struggle to escape from a desert oasis, thus embodying a narrative form. This image, which he discerned, has provided the piece with a motivating dramatic visual. There are moments of tension, release, introspection and moments of great energy.

The opening material introduces a string of suspensions, which is present throughout the work. The opening section is driving and energetic, while the contrasting middle section presents a chordal and lyrical realization. The piece completes its ternary form by reestablishing the opening ideas and a closing codetta. Percussion Arrangers Incorporated publishes *Oasean Escape* (2007), www.percussionarrangers.com

Suite for Vibraset (2008)

Mark Haas, multiple percussion

- I. Drummaphoning
- II. Metallic Things
- III. Bing, Bang, Boom

Chris Scarberry commissioned *Suite for Vibraset* in 2007. The idea behind the piece was to incorporate the sounds of a drum set with that of a vibraphone. Instruments from the drum set include the bass drum, hi-hat, toms and cymbals. The incorporation of drum set technique extends vibraphone performance to include both the hands and feet.

Throughout the piece, the performer is asked to establish various rhythmic ideas that are often isolated by the feet and the hands. This isolation creates an intricacy that is associated with the drum set, while integrating the melodic and harmonic ideas of the vibraphone.

Suite for Vibraset is a multi-movement piece that demonstrates a variety of elements including meter, texture, rhythm and tonality. The first movement is driven by the element of rhythm. All of the thematic content is based on the "paradiddle," which is a standard snare drum rudiment. The second movement uses common tones as a way to drive

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various harmonic progressions. *Metallic Things* embodies a timbre that exploits the metallic surfaces within the “Vibraset.” The final movement is driven by rhythm and melody. There is an ostinato pattern established in the beginning, which drives the majority of the movement. Each contrasting movement is compiled to create a unique blend of melody, harmony and rhythm.

Psalm 17, Lord When Your Glory Appears (2007)

Rena Eike, soprano

Mark Haas, piano

During the Catholic Liturgy, there is always a reading followed by a responsorial psalm. The psalm is often realized in the form of a song.

The song begins with a sung refrain by the cantor. The congregation is then invited to join in singing with the repeat of that refrain.

Between these refrains, the cantor will sing each respective verse from the psalm.

Lord When Your Glory Appears presents a conjunct melody with an arcing contour. The melodic content within the verses is generated from the opening material in the refrain. The congregation must easily interpret the response song. For this reason, the verses are organized into four measure phrases.

The musical psalm is written to serve a specific purpose within the liturgy and as a result has various elements dictated by its function.

As an active pastoral musician, I thought that it would be appropriate to include such works on my recital.

Deciduous (2008)

Robert Heath, clarinet

Caitlyn Zirkle, cello

Mark Haas, piano

Deciduous was inspired by fall, and was written as I reflected on the season. In fall many things are in transition; leaves change color, the temperature is colder, there are wildlife migrations and summer vegetation enters its dormant stage. Similarly, changes heard in the piece marking different sections are a metaphor for seasonal changes.

These changes are depicted musically through melody, harmony and dynamic contrast. To help demonstrate these elements, the clarinet and cello were chosen due to their contrasting timbres (wind vs. string). The piano was selected as a unifying element due to its wide range and sustain. Texturally, there is no solo instrument. Each instrument has an equal contribution to the work.

“Deciduous” is a term used to classify trees that lose their leaves. I chose this term not because of its visual implications, but because it is a classification of an ecosystem that brings about images of what I consider to be the fall season.

Thunderstorms (2008)

The Marshall University Percussion Ensemble

Steven Hall, conductor

Thunderstorms was written to recreate the aural experience of a thunderstorm. To depict this experience, I have incorporated many different timbres throughout the ensemble, and the listener will recognize “wind,” “rain” and “thunder” as events that occur interchangeably throughout the work. These various timbres are recognized as three different sounds, which are conventional to the percussion ensemble. Wood, metal and skin are three timbres within the ensemble exploited in this piece. These facilitate the aural perception of the thunderstorm. I chose the image of a thunderstorm to generate this piece because of its diverse and explicit sound possibilities.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts Degree in composition. Mr. Haas is a student in the composition studio of Dr. Mark Zanter.
